

**AMENDMENTS TO "THE CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED
APPLICATIONS"**

(Appl. No. 10/666,575-Amendment A)

Please amend the Cross-reference to Related Applications, at page 2, as follows:

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation-in-part of and claims under 35USC120 the benefit of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 10/030,021, filed December 26, 2001, now U.S. patent number 6,626,085 issued September 30, 2003, which, in turn, claims under 35USC371 the benefit of PCT application Ser. No. PCT/US00/11379, filed April 28, 2000, which, in turn, claims under 35 USC 119(c) the benefit of US provisional patent application Ser. No. 60/132,127, April 30, 1999.

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**(Appln. no. 10/666,575-Amendment A)**

Please amend the following pages of the specification, as follows:

At page 21:

Referring first to Fig.1, the preferred embodiment of the grinder assembly 10 of the present invention is seen to have a stainless steel housing 12 supported on a frame including a base 14 which, in turn, is supported above a counter top 16 by legs 18. A brew basket 20 with an open top 22, a container shaped body 24 and a handle 26 attached to the side of the body 24 is centrally located beneath the housing 12 to receive ground coffee through the open top 22.

The brew basket 20 is releasably mounted to the underside of the housing 12 by means of peripheral flanges 28 that slideably ride on rails 30 mounted beneath the housing 12. Before a grinding cycle, the brew basket with a coffee filter must be first mounted beneath the grinder outlet as shown. After the grinding cycle, the brew basket 20 is removed with the ground coffee and installed in a brewer (not shown) where hot water is passed through the ground coffee to prepare freshly brewed coffee.

The grinding assembly 10 preferably includes a pair of substantially identical hoppers, a left hopper 32 and a right hopper 34. Both hoppers have translucent portions 36 and 38 that are aligned with window openings 40 and 42 in the front of the housing 12. The controller for the grinder assembly, which forms no part of the present invention, has two pairs of grind start switches 44 and 46 for control of grinding of coffee from the left hopper 32 and the right hopper 34, respectively. Actuation of start switches 44 and 46 causes the grinder to grind preselected, relatively small amounts of coffee from the left and the right hoppers, respectively, while actuation of switches 48 and 50 results in the grinder assembly 10 grinding relatively large preselected amounts of coffee. Actuation of a power stop switch 52 terminates all grinding from either hopper. For further information concerning the controller, reference should be made to my copending

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application serial number 09/397,834, filed September 17, 1999 and entitled "Food Ingredient Grinder Assembly and Method", now patent number 6,783,089, which is hereby incorporated by reference.

The grinder assembly 10 also has a hinged top lid 54 that overlies the open tops of the hoppers 32 and 34. The lid is normally kept closed during operation but is opened to install the hoppers themselves, or coffee beans into the hoppers 32 and 34, into the housing 12. Pairs of arcuate hopper handles 56 and 58 (only one shown of each pair) extend outwardly from the fronts and backs of hoppers 32 and 34, respectively. The handles are located adjacent the tops of hoppers 32 and 34, and due to their arcuately shaped lower surfaces, are readily guided into their associated mounting slots 60 and 62. The arcuately shaped bottom surfaces of the handles are supported within the slots by correspondingly shaped, arcuately shaped bottom surfaces of the mounting slots in the front of the housing 12. These handles, in addition to facilitating manual mounting and removal of the hoppers from the housing, assist in the releasable mounting and support of the hoppers 32 and 34 in proper alignment within the housing 12 for proper interaction with the other elements of the hopper assembly.

Referring now to Fig.2, the grinder assembly 10 is seen with the left hopper 32 removed from within the housing. Preferably, the hoppers 32 and 34 are both made of translucent, impact resistant plastic that is integrally molded together with the pairs of handles 56 and 58. Accordingly, there is no need for there to be any other translucent window material permanently mounted to the housing and filling the window openings 40 and 42. The window openings are preferably free of any material, in order to facilitate access to the interior of the housing 12 for cleaning, maintenance or repair and to eliminate the cost of such additional translucent material.

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As best seen in Figs.5A-5C, the hoppers have laterally extending, side mounting members 64 and 66 that extend laterally from the opposite, relatively long, side walls 68 and 70 of hopper and another laterally extending forward mounting member 74 extending laterally outwardly from the front wall 72. The laterally extending mounting members are

supported by the top edges of the housing side and front walls, and, in the case of the of a double hopper grinding system such as shown here, the interior side of the hopper is supported by the edge of a support bar 80, Figs. 1 and 2. The support bar 80 is located at the same level as that of the top edges of the side and front walls of the housing, extends from the front to the back of the housing, and functions as an underlying support member. In the case of a single hopper system in which only one hopper is provided, there is no need for the support bar 80, for the hopper extends across the entire housing, and the side wall support members of the hopper are both supported by the upper edges of the opposite side walls of the housing.

In the case of the forward support member 74, in addition to extending laterally outwardly from the front wall, it has a canted portion that extends at an acute angle downwardly along the front wall 72. This downwardly canted portion restrains the top of the hopper 32 against relative lateral movement while also guiding the hopper into correct alignment with the front wall top edge. Once in place, the forward support member 74 also restrains the hopper against rearward movement. The downwardly extending portions of the support members also facilitates their use in accordance with the invention as handles for manually installing, removing and otherwise handling the hopper.

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As seen in Fig. 21, the top lid 54 also has a forward extending portion 76 that overhangs the forward mounting member 74 to facilitate use of the forward extending portion 76 as a handle for lifting and lowering the front part of the hinged body of the lid 54. The forward extending portion 76 extends beyond and overlies the entirety of the mounting member to enable the underside surface to be manually engaged without being blocked by the mounting member 74. After the lid is pivoted up and out of the way to an open position, then the mounting member 764 is accessible for lifting the hopper out of the housing 12.

Referring again to Figs. 2 and 3, the housing has a shelf 80 upon which is supported a hopper support outlet pad 82 with a pair of cylindrical support elements 84 mounted fore and aft to the frame of the grinding assembly 10. The hopper support outlet

pad 82 has a canted passageway 86 through which extends an intake pipe of a Y-shaped manifold 88 that passes coffee beans received at its inlet 90 to a common outlet 92 that is shared with another canted outlet passageway 94 that extends into the other intake pipe 96 of the Y-shaped intake manifold 88.

The coffee beans fall from the common outlet 92 into a grinding chamber 98 with powered, intermeshing grinding discs that are driven by an electrical motor 100. The ground coffee then falls through an outlet chute 102. The outlet chute 102 has a flared outlet opening 104 that faces the open top of the brew basket 20A and the ground coffee fall into the filter paper within the brew basket. The brew basket 20 is then removed and mounted to a brewer for the brewing of coffee and a new, empty brew basket is substituted in its place to receive the next batch of freshly ground coffee.

The removable unground ingredient hoppers 34 and 35 when mounted inside the housing 12 enable viewing inside through the window openings 40 and 42 from outside

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of the housing when the hoppers are mounted inside the housing. The window openings 40 and 42 are generally unblocked and generally open when the ingredient hoppers are not mounted within the housing 18.

Preferably, the entire bodies of the removable hoppers are made of translucent or transparent plastic such that the window 36. When the entire ingredient hopper is made of translucent material the portion of the side of the hopper that aligns with the window opening is the window. Alternatively, the windows are only provided at the locations of the window openings.

As best seen in Fig.3, the ingredient hoppers 32 and 34 each have a mounting member or flange 106 integrally formed together with the hopper body and the window, that is located adjacent the open top 108 of the ingredient hopper. The flange 106 extends laterally outwardly from the sides and around the perimeter of the open top 108 for hanging the hopper from a mating underlying support member defining opening 110 located adjacent the top of the housing 12. The flange 1086 is downwardly turned and extends downwardly along the perimeter of the open top alongside the side of the housing to restrain the hopper against lateral movement relative to the housing 12. A housing

cover 1102, is hingedly mounted by pivot pins connected to the hopper assembly housing, and is used to close the open top of the housing.

In keeping with an important aspect of the invention, the mounting of the hoppers 32 and 34 within the housing 12 and removal from the housing is accomplished manually without the need for any tools.

Referring now to Figs.3, 4A and 4B, the ingredient hoppers each have an outlet opening 112 for passage of the ingredient from the hopper into the grinding chamber. The

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outlet opening 112 has an outlet closure assembly 1154 that automatically closes the outlet opening 112 when the hopper is removed from the frame 20 that prevents spillage of the ingredient. When the hopper is removed for cleaning, loading or replacement with another hopper containing a different ingredient, from the frame 12, the closure assembly 114 automatically closes the hopper outlet opening 112 in response to removal from the housing, or whenever the closure assembly is not being forced to an open position. This prevents spillage of any unground ingredient into the housing or elsewhere and enables removal by the users as needed, without the need for any tools or the need for any actions needed to disconnect the hopper from the housing except the mere lifting of the hopper out of the top of the housing.

The outlet closure assembly 115 includes a closure member, or cover plate, 116 that is mounted to the hopper for sliding movement between a closed position, as shown in Fig. 4A, in which the hopper outlet opening 112 is covered by a portion of the cover plate 116, and an open position, as shown in Fig. 4B, in which the hopper outlet opening 112 is aligned with an opening 126 in the cover plate and uncovered, or open. The cover plate 116 is biased for movement from the closed position, as seen in Fig.4A, and the open position, as seen in Fig. 4B with a spring 118.

Within the hopper assembly housing is a solenoid 120. When the hopper 32 or 34 is located in its operative position, as shown in Fig. 3, the closure member is aligned for selectively resisting the spring 118 to move the cover plate 116 from the closed position to the open position. As seen in Fig.3, when the solenoid 118 is energized, a solenoid

plunger, pusher member, or pin, 127 is extended from the solenoid 118 and pushes on an upturned, generally vertical, side wall 122 of the cover plate 116 to move the cover plate

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As shown in Fig. 7A, the male member 150 is mounted to the distal end of the puller member 129 and extends upwardly and the female member is attached to the end wall 137 of the closure member 116 with the opening of the female member facing downwardly. Alternatively, as shown in Fig. 7B, the male connector member 150 is mounted to the upstanding wall 137 and extends downwardly, and the female connector member 146 is attached to the distal end of the pusher member 129 with an opening facing upwardly.

Referring to Fig. 8A, in another embodiment of a tool-less connector assembly 158, the releasable connectors are formed of a permanent magnet 160 carried by one of the connector 146 and the distal end of the puller member 129 that attaches through magnetic force to the other of the connector 146 and the puller member 129 that may be formed of ferromagnetic material that is attracted to the permanent magnet 160 or which carries a ferromagnetic member 162 or another permanent magnet with an opposite magnetic pole that is carried by the other member. The permanent magnet 160 and the one of the other permanent magnet and the ferromagnetic member 162 automatically magnetically adhere to each other when the hopper body is lowered to the operative position. The ferromagnetic and magnetic materials are selected to insure that the attractive force is sufficient to enable the puller member to pull the closure member 116 to the closed position in opposition to the force of spring force 118. If a permanent magnet and opposed permanent magnet or a ferromagnetic material are used to produce a magnetic closure force in lieu of the spring 116 to bias the closure member 115 to return to the closed position when not opposed, then the materials are selected to insure that this magnetic closure force is overcome.